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RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 0524
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0869
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0307
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY 0200
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 5986
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA PRIORITY 1211
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 004254

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2017
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SY, LE, CD, BM, IR, XF, FR
SUBJECT: FRANCE/GAERC: BROAD AGREEMENT ON MOST ISSUES

REF: A. STATE 141316
[1](#)B. STATE 143223
[1](#)C. PARIS 3534

PARIS 00004254 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Andrew Young for reasons 1.4
b and d.

[1](#)1. (C) On October 9, PolOff delivered ref A demarche to MFA CFSP Deputy Emmanuel Cohet, who indicated general agreement between U.S. views and French positions in advance of the October 15-16 GAERC meeting of EU foreign ministers. On October 12, PolOff delivered ref B demarche to MFA DAS-equivalent for Iran, Iraq and the Gulf Franck Gellet, who stated that the meeting will produce a compromise, as France's tough line will be mitigated by the variety of viewpoints within the EU.

[1](#)2. (C) KOSOVO: Cohet noted strong convergence between the U.S. and French positions, stressing that the current period of engagement is time-limited and that if there is no breakthrough, the Ahtissari plan and internationally-supervised independence for Kosovo is the best way forward. He expressed France's agreement that a unified and clear EU position on Kosovo is crucial.

[1](#)3. (C) RUSSIA: Cohet said France agrees that disagreements should not be "papered over," referencing President Sarkozy's recent visit to Russia. He said the French are working within the EU for a coherent, frank European dialogue with Russia.

[1](#)4. (C) ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE PROCESS: Cohet stated that France's priority objective, for the Annapolis meeting and for the situation in general, is delivering something concrete, echoing his response to the September GAERC demarche. He emphasized the importance that the international community, including the U.S. and the EU, work together to ensure this outcome and achieve "meaningful progress on the ground."

¶5. (C) IRAQ: French views on Iraq continue to echo the themes of FM Kouchner's August visit (see ref C). Cohet said France sees visits such as FM Kouchner's as important in sending positive political signals to the Iraqis. He remarked on FM Kouchner's ongoing interest in the refugee situation. He stated that the current momentum can be supported by the international community and Iraq's neighbors, but must also be maintained by Iraqis, noting the need for reconciliation and an end to violence.

¶6. (C) IRAN: Gelllet responded to the supplemental demarche on Iran by saying that he expected the final GAERC text to represent a compromise "not far from what we want." However, he doubted that we would be entirely satisfied given the many different points of view among EU members and what he termed the "enormous effort" France has had to employ to persuade other members of the stakes and the need to take firm action. On the political level, Gelllet referred to vastly different perceptions of the risk posed by Iran's possession of nuclear weapons as well as how imminently Iran would acquire such a capability. On the economic/commercial level, many states had different interests and inclinations as far as readiness to impose sanctions that would affect their own companies. France, he explained, had only recently concluded that the risk of a nuclear-armed Iran outweighed the financial price of restricting further investment by French firms in Iran. Gelllet also referred to a real difference of view over whether the EU should impose additional sanctions if the UNSC, which should normally take such a lead, failed to do so.

¶7. (C) With respect to the wording of the supplemental demarche, Gelllet appreciated our expression of support for France's tough line within the EU on this issue, but he observed "with the frankness only friends can use" that our message as written may have been counterproductive in terms

PARIS 00004254 002.2 OF 002

of what France had hoped to achieve. He argued that this was an occasion when a minimalist expression of our view without reference to the internal EU conversation on the subject would have been more effective. "We should be left to conduct our dialogue among ourselves," he emphasized.

¶8. (C) SYRIA-LEBANON BORDER: Cohet said that the U.S. views on a possible EU border mission were noted, while debate is ongoing. A mission would need to be very well planned and, as the U.S. non-paper states, include strict conditions to avoid giving advantage to Syria.

¶9. (C) BURMA: Cohet stated France's preference, which converges with U.S. views, for a two-pronged approach, with agreement on sanctions alongside a political process focused on dialogue with ASEAN countries, China, India, and Japan.

¶10. (C) LIBYA, CHAD: Cohet had no comment regarding Libya or Chad.

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